

Nine Star Hegemon Body Arts

- Chapter 31 Another Clash -

Chapter 31 Another Clash

Translator: BornToBe

Everyone's expressions changed when they heard those words. Fatty Yu cursed, "What idiot woman is that? Get out for daddy!"

Just as he finished speaking, a table whistled over from the corridor, smashing towards them.

But it suddenly stopped in mid-air. Long Chen had grabbed it, and with a flick of his hand, he sent it flying back.

A woman had just walked out over there. She had a disdainful expression and that table had clearly been thrown by her.

To actually first throw a table to smash them and then walk out, what a lofty manner.

But she hadn't expected that the table she had thrown would actually be smashing back at her with over ten times the force. Just the gale force created by the table made it hard for her to breath.

It had happened too quickly, and it was already too late for her to dodge. If she was hit by it, she would definitely end up with some broken bones.

The table suddenly blew apart. A man with a blade scar appeared in everyone's eyes as he protected the woman.

When everyone saw him, their expressions once more changed as they recognized him as the personal bodyguard of the Grand Xia's prince.

The scarred man was startled to see Long Chen and he narrowed his eyes, saying, "I didn't expect to run into you again so soon."

Although he had managed to break that table apart, he had not managed to completely disperse the force. A heavy footprint was left on the floor, showing that he had misjudged Long Chen's strength.

"No way around it. I am a young person after all. Gotta act energetically and move forward bit by bit every day. I can't compare to someone as amazing as yourself who

has already planted himself down and no longer moves forward. I, however, still have a long path to travel," he indifferently said.

The scarred man's face darkened, and he was just about to reply when another voice rang out. "Haha, it's been a couple of days, but brother Long is still as suave as ever."

The Grand Xia's prince, Xia Changfeng slowly walked up with the same likable smiling face he had used before.

Xia Changfeng smiled, "It's just a misunderstanding. Let me introduce you to my sister, Xia Baichi."

Long Chen's jaw dropped. So this crazy woman was actually a princess!

So this was the reason grandmaster Yun Qi had told him to be careful around her.

"Hmph, now you know how great the difference between us is!" Xia Baichi sneered at Long Chen's shock.

He shook his head. "Yes, we really are quite different. Even if I trained for ten thousand years, I wouldn't be comparable to an idiot like you. Xia Baichi, what a great name." [1]

"You!" Her eyes practically spit out flames.

Not only Xia Baichi, but even Xia Changfeng's eyes turned cold for a moment before he smiled, "Okay, now that everyone knows each other, I wonder what you were talking about before for it to get this lively?"

Fatty Yu and the others were naturally a bit uncomfortable with the Grand Xia's prince here. After all, he was a prince, and the difference in status was too great.

They weren't as obstinate as Long Chen and didn't dare say anything out of place to him. They were all silent for a moment.

Xia Baichi sneered, "I heard these toads insulting the third princess and talking about who she would marry. But funnily none of them knew my brother has already given a betrothal gift to the Empress Dowager to win the third princess over. For these guys to put their sights on my brother's fiancée, they really are courting death."

Long Chen's expression changed at that news. He coldly asked Xia Changfeng, "Is this true?"

"Long Chen, control your attitude," warned the scarred man.

"No matter." Xia Changfeng waved his hands at the scarred man. He smiled at Long Chen, "The reason I came to the Phoenix Cry Empire this time was because my father

ordered me to propose to the third princess. Since the Empress Dowager has already agreed, we should be able to quickly set a date. If brother Long has time in the future, I invite you to come to my Grand Xia for the wedding feast.”

Who knew whether Xia Changfeng was doing it on purpose, but his expression towards Long Chen was one of a victor looking pitifully on the loser.

Did he know? Long Chen couldn't help being worried despite knowing that Xia Changfeng was purposely provoking him.

But his anger still rose up uncontrollably. Maybe if he was doing this without knowing the truth then it would be fine.

But Long Chen knew that there was a conspiracy around Chu Yao. Those foreign spiritual energies within her were seeds of energy waiting to be reaped. It appeared someone had come to finally harvest them now that they were ripe.

Although the person who had set them in place wasn't Xia Changfeng, he was the one benefitting from it, so he was definitely a participant. He must know many secrets.

Thinking about his own experiences, he wondered whether his situation had anything to do with Xia Changfeng. The probability was definitely high.

His killing intent boiled when he thought of the conspiracies around him and Chu Yao. But now still wasn't the time to take action. He still had to get stronger.

Only the tip of the iceberg had been revealed to him now. He still wasn't in control, so he needed to endure. Keeping this in mind, his anger was quickly replaced with calmness.

Seeing Long Chen's angry expression suddenly fade, Xia Changfeng's heart shook slightly. The caution he felt towards Long Chen increased; enemies who could control their emotions were the truly terrifying ones.

“Brother Xia, I don't think you should propose to the third princess.” Long Chen shook his head.

“Huh? Why?”

“I've studied the secrets of fate. When I did some calculations for you, I realized brother Xia's name contains the word 'wind', while the third princess's name contains the word 'forest'. Wind will destroy the forest, so it's not good for the third princess.” Long Chen was watching Xia Changfeng's expression.[2]

“Haha, brother Long really is funny. How could such a thing be given true credence?” laughed Xia Changfeng.

Long Chen's eyes became even gloomier. By using his divine sense to its limits, he had noticed that while Xia Changfeng's expression might not have changed while he had spoken, his heart had jumped a bit.

Hmph, so this bastard really does know quite a lot.

"Not so. My ability to read faces is definitely at the master level; brother Xia, you have much fire in your life, and that is why you were given the name Changfeng. Fire borrows the power of the wind. Such a flame spreads for thousands of miles with nothing being able to block it anymore. It truly is a good name," praised Long Chen.

Xia Changfeng smiled slightly, but he also paused for a moment, his heart going wild. Did Long Chen really have such skills?

His name really had been inspired by a mysterious person who had explained it just as Long Chen had explained it. His life was fire-fated, and only due to this did his parents name him Changfeng.

Although he kept his expression as calm as ever, his heart was jumping and his blood surging. The change in his breathing was unable to escape Long Chen's awareness.

Long Chen laughed inside, not expecting his fake act to actually touch upon something. He continued, "As for our third princess, her name contains the 'Yao' character. You are fire-fated, but her name has water. More importantly, her name also has the character for 'king', so it's not just ordinary water, but the king of water.[3]

"Wind and forest repel each other, while water will put out fire. You cannot marry someone with such a name. And furthermore, the capital is surrounded by water on four sides, so it's far too risky for brother Xia.

"If you dare marry the third princess, you most likely won't live long enough to leave the Phoenix Cry Empire. So, I advise you to give up on this notion.

"Women are like clothes; for just a piece of clothing, you will put your life in danger? It's just not worth it."

Shi Feng, fatty Yu, and the others' expressions all changed. Was he threatening the prince?

As for Long Chen's ability to read faces, they half believed it and half doubted it. But now, Long Chen was explaining it all very clearly and they couldn't help trusting it.

At this time, Xia Changfeng's expression was very unsightly. Long Chen's words made him very uncomfortable as he had no way to refute them.

“Don’t try deluding us with your lies. You think you can confuse a prince just by using a few parlor tricks? I think you’re getting tired of living,” shouted the scarred man angrily.

“A dog who won’t listen actually dares talk before his master?” frowned Long Chen.

From the start, he could feel the scarred man’s killing intent. And that killing intent chilled him to his bones.

That meant the scarred man was mulling over how to kill him. Long Chen definitely wouldn’t give him any face.

“Bastard!” The scarred man angrily shouted and punched at Long Chen.

“STOP!”

Xia Changfeng prevented the scarred man from attacking. He had already returned to his normal state at this time, and he smiled at Long Chen. “Who would have thought brother Long had such a humorous side? My horizons have truly been broadened. Unfortunately, I still have things to do at this time, so let’s talk another day.”

Xia Changfeng brought both the scarred man and Xia Baichi away, but Xia Baichi still gave Long Chen an angry glare; her disdainful gaze seeming to consider Long Chen to be just a piece of meat.

After getting down the stairs, the scarred man ruthlessly said, “If it weren’t for you blocking me, Long Chen would already be a dead man now.”

“This Long Chen definitely has to die. I also almost lost control of myself. That bastard really is loathsome. But Long Chen still has other uses for now. If he died, then it would affect our plans. Let him live a few more days,” sighed Xia Changfeng.

Even someone as calm as him had almost taken action to attack him. He was truly infuriated.

“Master sent orders for me to defeat Long Chen in front of that old bastard Yun Qi. If you kill him before then, it will definitely anger that old ghost,” coldly said Xia Baichi. “That old idiot. Whether I sincerely begged or tried to seduce him, he just wouldn’t help me. What a waste of time.”

Xia Changfeng looked at her and shook his head. “From the beginning, master’s attempts at having you entice him were unlikely to work.”

“Why?”

Xia Changfeng shook his head and didn't reply. The scarred man beside him sighed, "Because princess, you don't have the proper temperament of a woman."

Xia Baichi sent a slap at the scarred man's face, but he just smiled indifferently, seeming very accustomed to this.

Once they had left, Long Chen and the rest also lost interest in drinking. Long Chen felt as if time was running out for him.

The closer he got to the truth, the more dangerous it became. Once the whole truth was revealed, if he didn't have enough strength, then he would undoubtedly die.

But there was fundamentally not enough time. He had to take advantage of every moment to cultivate. Just the slightest increase in power would give him a greater chance at surviving.

But Chu Yao's situation was also pressing on him. He had to race against time and resolve her matter.

"Are you Long Chen?"

Suddenly, a lean, middle-aged man walked up the restaurant and greeted Long Chen.

Chapter 32 Huayun Pavilion Invitation

Translator: BornToBe

"Are you Long Chen?"

"I am." Long Chen was startled, as he himself didn't even recognize this person.

"Perfect. Under the pavilion master's orders, I have come to give you this invitation card." The lean middle-aged man rejoiced. "Young noble, you might not recognize me, but my lowly self is an attendant of the Huayun Pavilion. I have especially come to invite you to our annual auction."

Only now did Long Chen understand. He was being pulled into some kind of business work. As for being an 'attendant', it would be more accurate to just call him a foot runner.

Long Chen had a great understanding of this Huayun Pavilion. It was the most famous auction house in the Phoenix Cry Empire and was an extremely huge existence.

Although it might not be comparable to the alchemist guild, it was definitely powerful. It was the closest partner of the adventurers guild.

The adventurers guild was an alliance formed by countless adventurers, and although it was a loose partnership, it had many members.

Adventurers traveled the wilderness for most of their days, and although it was an extremely dangerous occupation, its rewards were also accordingly great.

All kinds of strange medicinal herbs and Magical Beast cores could be found, and if one's luck was really ridiculous, then it was even possible to find an ancient inheritance.

Adventurers were very fond of collaborating with the Huayun Pavilion due to their extremely fair prices. Selling their gains there was the most secure method to sell their spoils.

Some of them didn't go into danger themselves. They would make deals with other people or even kill others for their spoils. Those were extremely common affairs. Sometimes, the city was even more frightful than the wilderness.

So, the Huayun Pavilion's annual auction would always attract countless people. They would select the rarest treasures that they had gathered over the year for that auction.

Almost every auction would result in them delighting at the high bidding, so the extent of their auction also became greater over the time.

In the past two years, the auction's quality had become incredibly great, and they had even set down new rules. It was now impossible to enter without an invitation card.

And the people who could obtain an invitation card were only people with exceedingly high statuses. Long Chen was the first youth to receive such a thing.

"This is a great thing, brother Long. But if you don't have enough money, then it would just be a waste of time," said Shou Hou.

The Huayun Pavilion's auction wares were all the best amongst the best. Every single item was extremely desirable.

Adding on the auction house's expert advertising and enticements, the price would soar wildly all the time. Without money, you could only look with envy.

"Do you have a list of things being auctioned?" asked Long Chen.

"This lowly one only has a list of the first ten things. You can have a look," the lean man apologetically said.

In order to maintain its mystery, the best things being auctioned off would never be allowed to be leaked.

Long Chen looked over it. His pupils shrank when he saw the Starfusing Grass on the list. It was actually Starfusing Grass that was over a thousand years old.

Normal Starfusing Grass was always within ten to a hundred years old. Over a hundred years old was rare, and over a thousand years old made it an exceptionally precious treasure.

Such a treasure was actually just the first item of the list.

Seeing Long Chen's shock, the lean man became pleased and said, "As a Pill Apprentice, any precious medicinal pills you have can be handed over to us. If the quality and rareness of it reach the standards, we can consider adding it to the auction. But we charge 50% commission."

Fifty percent?! Ha, how vicious. You actually dare ask for fifty percent? Do you dare ask for more?

As if seeing through Long Chen's thoughts, he laughed, "As long as what you have is good enough, then after our packaging and advertising, in addition to our chief auctioneer's embellishment, the price will definitely rise far beyond your imaginations."

Hearing that, Long Chen became more at ease. At the same time, he felt a bit of admiration at how they ran their business.

What Long Chen didn't know was that this man's job really wasn't as easy as he thought it was. The people in the lean man's position would get three quotas for the annual auction, meaning they were only allowed to invite three people.

Whether those people were buying or selling things, the one who had invited him would get a set percentage.

The more they bought or sold, the more money that person would get. So each person invited had to be carefully selected.

But after this many years, more and more wealthy people were being invited earlier, leaving only a few behind. Now they were just picking over the dredges.

This lean man was very astute, so as soon as he had received his quota, he had rushed over to invite Long Chen, afraid that others would get there first.

There was no other way. Long Chen was the most famous person within his generation in the capital, and he was definitely a big fish with potential.

"Please look over this lowly one's calling card." He handed over a small card to Long Chen.

“Fu Gui?”[1]

“Haha, I come from a poor family. My parents wished for me to gain riches, so they came up with such a name.” The lean man explained with embarrassment.

His explanation also caused Long Chen to feel a bit of sympathy. Nodding, he said, “I am definitely very interested in buying things. I also have some things that I want to auction off. How does it work?”

Fu Gui’s eyes brightened. “Any treasures can be brought directly to the Huayun Pavilion. We can also go to your door to get them.”

Long Chen nodded. There was just less than a month until the auction, so he still had time. After setting an appointment with Fu Gui, Long Chen and the others all left the restaurant.

“Long Chen, the Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival is a week from now. You definitely have to come out,” said Shi Feng expectantly.

The Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival was the largest celebration of the empire. The entire capital’s unmarried population would participate. It was extremely lively, and it was the festival that all the young people looked forward to the most.

Especially those unmarried men; each of them would be like a bull, determinedly waiting for a chance of attracting a woman’s attention.

As for the women, they also wanted to see if they could find an acceptable man.

It was a bit controversial for men and women to be together like this, but during the one day of the Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival, all those taboos were lifted, and both genders could party wildly together as much as they wanted to.

Thus, many of them made preparations beforehand for this festival.

And the most fun part of it was the fight over the number one junior warrior in their generation. There would always be a martial stage during the festival. As long as you were a cultivator and were under twenty years old, anyone could go up.

The first place battle was the highlight. As long as you got that title, it would no longer even be possible for you to be low-key. Countless women would send flowers after you, enough to bury you even. Just thinking about it set the men’s hearts on fire.

Even the calm Shi Feng was burning with passion. And as expected, fatty Yu and the others were all bursting with enthusiasm.

“Brother Long, you definitely have to come. If you don’t go, then we won’t want to go either,” begged fatty Yu.

“Then how about none of us go and we’ll find somewhere to get a drink instead,” laughed Long Chen.

“Nooo, master Long. We’ve been waiting for this for a year!!” Fatty Yu and the others immediately acted sullen. Some of them got on their knees and hugged Long Chen’s legs, not letting go until he agreed.

“Long Chen, if you don’t go, then it will be too boring. In the capital, you are the most famous of our generation! You’re viewed as number one, and if you don’t go, then it will disappoint countless people,” persuaded Shi Feng.

“Hm? When did I get such a big name?” Long Chen was startled.

“You didn’t know? Even the little kids know about it. Dual martial and pill cultivation that shakes heaven and earth, the Heroic Assembly House’s angry god, the one who spread his wings and flew out of the Phoenix Cry Empire, the one who laughs arrogantly at the nine heavens, Long Chen.” Shi Feng looked at Long Chen strangely.

“...”

What kind of situation is this? How did I not know? There are poems about me? Long Chen was struck foolishly silent.

“Okay, brother Long, all your brothers are hoping to enjoy the festivities with you. But whatever you say is what we’ll do.”

Shi Feng wasn’t the same as the others. He had considered Long Chen as his brother from the start, so he didn’t need to have as many misgivings as the others.

“Ugh, I’ll go.” Long Chen smiled bitterly; he had originally been planning on training for an extra day.

Fatty Yu and the others all cheered at that. It was as if they were seeing a scene of countless beautiful women before them.

After splitting ways with the others, Long Chen quickly rushed home. He didn’t even eat dinner; the time he was wasting was too great. He had to urgently increase his cultivation base.

Although the FengFu Star had already been perfectly condensed, but now that he had gained a Dantian, he wanted to quickly condense more cyclones.

There were currently only three cyclones in his Dantian. He wanted to continue forming them, but there was no clue on how to do so within the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art in his memories.

Back when the FengFu Star had condensed, three of the cyclones had appeared all at once. Even Long Chen didn't know how it had happened.

Now, Long Chen found that when he circulated his Dantian, the three cyclones would also revolve with it. This method was only for continuously sending energy throughout him for battle, and wasn't for cultivating.

Drawing some of the FengFu Star's spiritual energy out to the cyclones, they immediately grew ten times the size and Long Chen's breathing became rushed in anticipation. But this was also for battle and not how to cultivate them.

Long Chen took a deep breath, and hesitating for a moment, he slowly circulated his qi to absorb the outside world's spiritual qi.

However, this time, he didn't send it throughout his body but gathered it into his FengFu Star.

Following Long Chen's absorption of heaven and earth's spiritual qi, the FengFu Star started to quickly circulate.

"This is the way!"

Long Chen was elated; although he didn't know exactly what was happening, this definitely seemed to be more for cultivating and less for battle.

Doing his best to continue absorbing, the FengFu star gradually became brighter under the continuous absorption. In the end, it appeared like a blazing sun.

BOOM!

The FengFu Star shook, and it immediately became dimmer. At the same time, another cyclone appeared within Long Chen's Dantian.

"Haha, I've finally found the way to continue cultivating."

Along with the fourth cyclone's formation, Long Chen found out that the meridians within his body had also expanded slightly, and his whole body was surging with energy.

"Good, let's continue."

Long Chen slowly closed his eyes and began to attack the fifth Heavenstage.

Chapter 33 Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival

Translator: BornToBe

Within the inner part of the palace was the fourth prince's study. The fourth prince was sitting with his eyelids half closed as he quietly listened to the Savage Marquis's report.

"Master, no news has come from the Border Suppression Marquis. The army continues to hold the same area and no reply has come from master's letters," reported the Savage Marquis respectfully.

The fourth prince slowly opened his eyes. Within them was a glimmer of cold grimness. "What a reckless, obstinate old man. I gave him that much time yet he still treats me like some pushover."

"This Long Tianxiao truly doesn't know greatness. He still refuses to surrender to prince after this many years. Truly hateful to the point of deserving a thousand deaths," said the Savage Marquis ruthlessly.

The fourth prince glanced at him and said, "I know about the past grievances between you and Long Tianxiao. If it hadn't been for that punch of his, then you would have had a high chance of advancing to the Tendon Transformation realm. But Long Tianxiao's strength doesn't just lie in his martial might; otherwise, I wouldn't view him so importantly. Unfortunately, he's too stubborn and can't be used by me. Since he can't become one of mine, let him become a dead man."

The Savage Marquis rejoiced when he heard of this. "Master, do you have a plan?"

"Right now isn't the time to deal with him. However, he has indeed wasted so many years of my effort. So first, kill his only son. Count it as him paying some interest," said the fourth prince indifferently.

"Long Chen? How should he be killed?" asked the Savage Marquis, somewhat puzzled.

The current Long Chen counted as one of the alchemist guild's people and the rumors reported that he was close to grandmaster Yun Qi. Even a prince couldn't avoid the alchemist guild's punishment.

"I've already fixed that matter, so you don't need to worry about it. Just quietly gather your forces. We're about to make some big moves; don't forget to not attract any undue attention," ordered the fourth prince coldly.

"Yes, master. Don't worry, I'll definitely make sure there's not even the slightest leak," promised the Savage Marquis hastily.

His current strength was just at the Blood Condensation realm, so his martial might wasn't very outstanding. And it was exactly because he wasn't overly eye-attracting that the fourth prince gave him such a high position.

He was extremely loyal and devoted, and he was also very meticulous with how he handled things. He hadn't made any slipups in all the years he had worked for him.

After the Savage Marquis left, the fourth prince looked at the books on his shelves. A long while later, he sighed.

"Long Tianxiao. Is it worth the trouble? So much of my sincerity over the years was unable to move you. Don't blame me for being vicious."

...

BOOM!

Another explosion rang out within his body, and Long Chen's eyes popped open. His eyes shined brightly like the stars, yet his gaze was as sharp as a sword.

Seven cyclones were slowly revolving within his Dantian. A pleased smile appeared on Long Chen's face.

He had spent seven full days focused only on cultivating, advancing four levels. Such a speed would definitely shock and frighten anyone else, yet Long Chen still wasn't satisfied with it.

Originally, he had thought that as he condensed more cyclones, his cultivation would become faster since he could absorb more energy. But he quickly found out that his assumption had been wrong.

Every new cyclone had been harder to condense than the last. The amount of spiritual qi needed exponentially shot up; the fourth cyclone had only required six hours to form, while the seventh cyclone had required three full days.

That was basically the sum of all the three cyclones before it. But Long Chen was still pleased when he noticed that his meridians had become even firmer as he reached the seventh Heavenstage.

However, he was still unable to use Split the Heavens. But this didn't disappoint him; in fact, it made him even more excited. This meant that Split the Heavens was an exceptionally powerful Battle Skill. For him to have used some random pill to exchange for such a high class Battle Skill had definitely been worth it.

Originally, he had been planning on going back there and bribing that Blood Condensation expert with more medicinal pills for some more high grade Battle Skills.

But now that Chu Yao had given him the Breaking Wind Fist and the Flamecloud Palm, he had enough. The two of them were both high Mortal class Battle Skills. Most likely, only the third floor of the Battle Skill Pavilion would hold Battle Skills of that level. Battle Skills on that level were things that even that Blood Condensation guard would not have the qualifications to learn.

It was not the case that the more Battle Skills you learned, the better. Unless martial artists were pushed to their limit, they normally wouldn't use them.

That was because Battle Skills used too much spiritual qi. Ordinary Qi Condensation cultivators could only use a low grade Mortal Battle Skill once.

After using it once, their remaining spiritual qi would be insufficient to use it a second time. So unless you could defeat your enemy in one move, no one would waste their spiritual qi like that.

Furthermore, the higher the class of the Battle Skill, the more spiritual qi would be required to use it. High Mortal class Battle Skills were normally reserved for Blood Condensation cultivators to use.

Only they had the required spiritual qi for such a frightening cost. But of course, Long Chen wasn't ordinary.

His spiritual qi was stored within his FengFu Star. By Long Chen's calculations, he could use a high Mortal class Battle Skill seven times.

But if he were to send his FengFu Star's spiritual qi to his seven cyclones in order to produce his absolute max power, then he would only be able to use a high Mortal class Battle Skill once. He wouldn't be able to use it a second time even if he forced himself to death.

Currently, Long Chen still could not condense a second star. The Nine Star Hegemon Body Art required that only after the first star became a 'true star' could the second star be condensed.

But Long Chen still didn't know how to make his star a 'true star'. He also didn't know what the nine star transformations in his memories were. He really was becoming more and more puzzled as he progressed on his cultivation path with the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art. Therefore, he could only continue forming more cyclones for now.

"Young master, can I enter?" Bao-er's clear voice came from outside.

"Enter."

Bao-er entered with a set of clothes in her hands. She laughed, "Young master, today is the Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival. Mrs. Long has sent me to make you presentable."

She had him sit down properly while she washed his face and combed his hair. Long Chen laughed, "Is this really so important?"

"Haha, the Madam has already said that young master is now sixteen and is the age for getting married. She told me to properly dress you. If any family's pretty daughter sees you, haha... you understand." Bao-er laughed.

"No way. My mom really thinks it's that urgent?" Long Chen was speechless. Fatty Yu and the others were all seventeen, but they hadn't gotten married.

"Of course it's urgent. I worry about my grandchildren." Mrs. Long walked in and looked at Long Chen. "The matter of Meng Qi can be handled slowly and considered a long term goal. But you also need to have short term goals. It's called insurance. I suggest you go find a suitable young lady and get some kids while also pursuing Meng Qi."

"What?" Long Chen couldn't believe his ears.

"What? For a man to have multiple wives and concubines is common. Isn't it fine to just reserve Meng Qi as the first wife?" Mrs. Long spoke as if that was as it should be.

"Are you serious?"

"Of course. But you can't tell Meng Qi about it at the beginning. Once you two become closer, she'll naturally agree to it."

Long Chen blinked. Even this was fine? "Mom, dad hasn't bothered to communicate with us in this many years. Does he also have wives and concubines outside?"

"Don't say so much nonsense. But it would be absolutely fine for your father to have some extra wives or concubines," she chided. But a guilty, ashamed glimmer flashed through her eyes.

"Haha, I'm just joking mom. Don't worry, if there are any suitable women during the Lantern Festival, I'll bring a few back for you." Seeing his mom wasn't very happy, he joked.

"Tch, who do you think you are to bring 'a few' home? Let me tell you, don't try any fake smiles with your mom. You have to properly remember this matter, understood?" she solemnly warned.

"Fine, fine, fine. I'll act however you tell me," promised Long Chen. Inside, he didn't feel that it was quite right, but he didn't dare say that out loud to his mother.

After making himself presentable, Long Chen put on a blue robe. It was the perfect size and after putting it on, he looked like a whole new person.

Sword-like eyebrows and glowing with health; although he wasn't outstandingly handsome, Bao-er unceasingly praised him.

"Haha, don't worry Madam. How many women could resist our young master?"

"Ah, don't praise him too much." Although Mrs. Long said this, she was pleased inside. She was filled with pride looking at her handsome son.

"Okay, it's time. Go." Mrs. Long pushed Long Chen out the door.

"Mom, the sun is still so high. It's going to be a while before it darkens," Long Chen helplessly pointed out as he looked at the western sun that had barely begun to descend.

"Bad child, you don't know what it means to prepare early. First get a good spot, and only then can you increase your chances. Quick, go."

After saying this, she closed the gates on him.

Long Chen rolled his eyes. It wasn't like he was setting up a stall for business. Why did he need to first occupy a good position? But since he was already driven out, he still left.

He saw countless people bustling in front of their homes, hanging lanterns. Seeing Long Chen, a youth joked, "Brother, you really are early."

"What do you know? The early bird gets the worm," retorted Long Chen.

"Ha, true. Many thanks for the reminder big brother. I'll go change now." That person ran back into his house.

"What a kid. Only thirteen yet he wants to play with women."

His mouth twitched. The children these days really were maturing too early. He had also truly come out too soon, and when others saw that he had come out so early, it only led to more jokes from people along the way.

He was early enough to be embarrassed, but he also didn't have enough time to go cultivate either. And just sitting around would also be boring.

Just as he was hesitating on what to do next, an almost solid murderous aura attacked him. A gust of wind shot straight towards Long Chen's back.

Hastily turning, Long Chen's fist just managed to block a sneak attacker's punch.

Gale winds exploded when they collided, and Long Chen was forced back several steps. Raising his head, he saw a masked man who was sending another punch at him. The man's strength was very great and the wind whistled with his every blow.

Long Chen coldly snorted. Ignoring the punch, he kicked between that person's legs.

That person's battle experience was very rich, and he directly stopped his punch and switched to defense, his leg blocking Long Chen's attack.

After blocking it, a fierce energy erupted from that person's body. A fist ripped through the space and completely cut off Long Chen's retreat paths.

Coldness filled Long Chen's eyes. Just as he was about to use all his power, he suddenly thought of something.

"Spirit of the Bull!"

Long Chen shouted and their punches collided. He was sent flying dozens of steps, his blood surging tumultuously.

Just as that person was about to keep attacking after sending Long Chen flying, he suddenly turned to see the shadows of people approaching them.

"Hmph, kid, next time I'll take your life." He coldly snorted when he saw the pale-faced Long Chen. He disappeared in front of Long Chen's eyes with shocking speed.

After he left, Long Chen's pale face once more returned to its normal rosiness.

"Idiot, you want to test my power?"

Long Chen patted the dust off his clothes. Looking in the direction where that person left from, a certain thought arose in his mind...

Looks like tonight won't be so boring after all!

Chapter 34 Start of the Lantern Festival

Translator: BornToBe

In the middle of that sneak attack just now, Long Chen had realized his opponent's true intentions. Although he had appeared to be trying to kill him, that was just an act.

What kind of assassin would reveal his killing intent before striking? No real killer would make such a basic error.

And that person hadn't had any true killing intent, only a murderous aura. Although each attack was powerful, he had obviously been holding back.

It was a completely different style from an assassin. So at the last moment, Long Chen deliberately lost and allowed himself to be sent flying. He concealed how much spiritual energy he had and pretended to be injured.

As he had expected, this 'killer' immediately left. Did they think he was an idiot? Those people who had been coming over were just ordinary people who he could have easily killed first before leaving.

But the killer had acted startled and retreated hastily. Long Chen snorted disdainfully at such shoddy acting.

He knew that person definitely had to have a high status who was too prideful and believed himself to be infallible.

Although he didn't know why he had been tested, Long Chen knew there would definitely be a follow-up. Otherwise, all of this would have been meaningless.

"Brother Long, you really are early haha."

As he was considering this, he ended up walking into the public plaza, and Shou Hou shouted out to him excitedly.

The plaza was several miles wide, and countless lanterns dozens of meters tall had been set out. But since it hadn't turned dark yet, they hadn't been lit.

Crowds of people were bustling in the plaza. All kinds of constructions were being finished.

Despite not being lit, the countless varied lanterns were still a spectacular sight.

Young men and women were all over the plaza and starting to play. The sound of conversation filled the air, and occasional bell-like laughter would ring out.

But some of those laughs were extremely unpleasant to listen to. Who knew whether those braying laughs were always like that or whether it was due to this being a special occasion, but they caused one's hair to stand on end.

The women were holding hands and having fun, while at the same time, secretly stealing glances at the men. Although it was almost autumn, the plaza gave off a fresh feeling of spring.

Some of the men truly were doing as Long Chen's mother had said and had picked a high spot early on. Some of them were on high rocks, some on bridges, their hands waving a fan in front of them in a flirtatious manner.

What shocked and caused him to be speechless was that some of them were acting like roosters and being excessively lewd.

"Shou Hou, this is the legendary Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival with handsome men and beautiful women?" Long Chen almost couldn't believe his eyes.

"Uh... brother Long, we're early. The truly beautiful women haven't come out yet. Only those people without confidence come this early," he awkwardly explained. But as soon he said it he backtracked. "But brother Long is definitely an exception."

Long Chen truly had come too early. He blamed it all on his mom and had an urge to cry. But as the sky gradually darkened, more and more people started to show up.

These new additions were definitely a grade better than the ones who had gotten there so early. At the very least, their laughs were not so frightening. It was pretty good in terms of both numbers and quality.

"Haha, brother Long, you really came." Shi Feng had just arrived, quickly noticing Long Chen and Shou Hou who were hiding in a corner.

"Haha, brother Long, you really are dashing today." Fatty Yu and the others also came in succession and came to greet Long Chen.

"Fatty Yu, you aren't bad either. You've lost quite a bit of weight. In the past, we didn't even know how you managed to squeeze into places," joked Shou Hou. Everyone also laughed.

As they were having fun, more and more people ended up showing up, and the plaza became completely full.

The young people were all in small groups within the crowd and quietly chatting. But all of their gazes were roving around, looking for targets.

"Long Chen, let's join them. It's almost time for the lantern festival to begin," said Shi Feng.

Fatty Yu and the others were already feeling a bit pressed. But since Long Chen never said anything, they had only waited beside him patiently.

Actually, Long Chen really didn't want to go into the crowd. But not wanting to be rude, he still resolved himself to enter the huge crowd of people.

As soon as Long Chen's group entered, they attracted many people's attention. One reason was because they were one of the last groups to join.

But this group of people was also very special. Tall, short, fat, skinny, there was someone for anyone's taste.

"Huh, who's that? How handsome! How come I've never seen him before?" One woman immediately let out a surprised shout.

Long Chen was definitely not bad in terms of looks, but it definitely hadn't reached the point of amazing and awing people. But as for whether a flower was pretty or not was decided in the eye of the beholder.

Beside fatty Yu, Shou Hou, and the others, even the dark-faced Shi Feng appeared much more handsome than normal.

"You don't know? That's Long Chen, the Border Suppression Marquis's son."

"Heavens, he's Long Chen? The Long Chen praised as the capital's number one in the junior generation?"

"I heard he's even a Pill Apprentice and might even become grandmaster Yun Qi's first disciple."

Gossip about him filled the air, and many women sent furtive gazes his way. Some of the bold ones actually started to shout his name.

Sweat started to roll down his face. Long Chen had never seen such a battle, and no matter how thick his face was, he still couldn't block it all out.

"Brother Shi, you go to the front. Fatty Yu and Hou-zi[1], you guys come up a bit more too."

Long Chen straightforwardly hid behind his friends, lowering his head while he walked. This relieved quite a bit of pressure on him.

After wading through the crowd for a bit, they arrived at a huge martial arena that was hundreds of meters wide.

"Long Chen, this martial arena is for finding the number one junior warrior in the Phoenix Cry Empire. Are you interested?" smiled Shi Feng.

"Definitely not. I don't like being a trick-performing monkey." Long Chen shook his head.

"Hehe, then I'm relieved," laughed Shi Feng.

Long Chen was startled for a moment before realizing that Shi Feng was actually after that title.

“Good luck.” Long Chen extended a fist.

Shi Feng bumped fists with him and said, “Don’t worry. As long as it’s not you, then I should be okay.”

“Hey, you two are being rude. You keep ignoring our needs. Let’s go bros, we’ll take advantage of our time and go fool around,” shouted Shou Hou as he pulled the rest of the group away.

“Remember to meet back here in a while,” shouted back Shi Feng.

The two of them didn’t even know whether they were heard. The others disappeared quickly into the crowd, each looking for a target.

“Shi Feng, how’s your cultivation base?” Seeing no one was around, Long Chen quietly asked him.

“The peak of the first Heavenstage of Blood Condensation. In just a short while, I should be able to reach the second level,” Shi Feng replied gratefully.

The reason he had managed to reach his current level so quickly had been because of Long Chen’s assistance. The earlier someone entered the Blood Condensation realm, the greater it would benefit their future cultivation.

If someone only managed to break through to Blood Condensation after thirty, then that person probably would never be able to progress past the first Heavenstage of Blood Condensation.

Currently, Shi Feng wasn’t even eighteen but had broken through to Blood Condensation realm. In the future, he would have over a thirty percent chance of advancing to the Tendon Transformation realm.

The Tendon Transformation realm was the level which the strongest existences in the empire were at. There were only three of them in the entire Phoenix Cry Empire.

Long Chen nodded. Such a speed meant that Shi Feng was extremely hardworking. But when he examined Shi Feng’s Dantian, he found that his Spirit Root was only of average quality. The Tendon Transformation realm would probably be the limit of his martial path. There wasn’t much hope for advancing further.

“Later, I’ll help you refine a Foundation Establishment Pill that will stabilize your foundation. With your work attitude, you should be able to break through to the Tendon Transformation realm before you’re thirty,” said Long Chen.

“Was the pill you gave me last time really refined by yourself?” Shi Feng was delighted by that offer, but he couldn’t help doubting it slightly.

“Interesting. If I didn’t refine it, then did I steal it?” Long Chen was a bit irked.

“No, but we originally thought it was grandmaster Yun Qi who gave it to you,” said Shi Feng lightly.

After all, Long Chen had completely changed in just the blink of an eye. He had gone from a trash who couldn’t cultivate to becoming a Pill Apprentice. They were still surprised by this and so, they couldn’t help but make up some theories.

However, what Long Chen was telling him now meant that he had refined it himself.

“Right now, your foundation isn’t bad, but it’s not solid enough. The main issue is that at the initial Qi Condensation levels, your cultivation was a bit too rushed. This left a few faults on your foundation, so it will be an obstruction when you attack Tendon Transformation in the future. The Foundation Establishment Pill, which I’ll refine for you, won’t be able to fix all of those faults, but it will make it much easier for you to break through to the Tendon Transformation realm,” said Long Chen.

“Brother Long, I won’t say any words for courtesy. If brother has any need in the future, then just tell me and my life will be yours,” swore Shi Feng solemnly.

“Such words aren’t required between brothers. Whoa, what’s that?”

Long Chen suddenly saw a dozen guards with embroidered clothes walking over from the distance. They were holding some kind of huge objects in their hands, but he was unable to see its shape.

“Those are the princesses’ lanterns. The princesses will each hand-make one during the festival to bless the empire with luck,” explained Shi Feng.

The princesses? Then, he definitely had to have a good look. Unfortunately, he didn’t know which one was Chu Yao’s. As for those guards, they all marched behind a huge curtain which both faced the crowd as well as the martial stage.

The festivities had yet to truly begin, so they wouldn’t let the people to see them too early. Even more guards started to appear, completely surrounding the perimeter.

Interested in what those guards were doing, those young people who were messing around also started shifting over.

The area became completely crammed extremely quickly. Some of the women who hadn't made it in time to get a good spot actually batted her eyes at a man, who immediately gave up his spot for her.

As for those men, they could only watch from a great distance. Even fatty Yu and the others could only stare from afar. After all, who had told them to go and chase after girls? All the spots closer to the stage and huge curtain were already taken now, so they could only stand in the distance.

Once everyone was seated, a phoenix carriage appeared and a shout rang out, causing all the guards to kneel.

"The Empress Dowager's carriage has arrived!"

Chapter 35 Sparks Fly

Translator: BornToBe

Following the announcement, eight ladies gracefully came out to support a woman down from the phoenix carriage.

Every single person kneeled down when that woman descended, respectfully calling, "Greetings, Empress Dowager."

But Long Chen was not amongst the people kneeling. That wasn't because of his arrogance or cultivation base.

According to the empire's customs, cultivators above the Blood Condensation realm didn't have to kneel towards princes. However, cultivation base didn't matter when it came to the Empress Dowager. Any citizen of the empire had to kneel in front of her.

The exception that allowed him to ignore this custom was his status as a Pill Apprentice. As an alchemist, he had the option to not kneel. Furthermore, he was sitting amongst a huge crowd of people so he wouldn't be noticed.

"Acknowledged."

The Empress Dowager merely glanced at these people before indifferently raising her hand.

Only then did everyone slowly get up. Long Chen closely examined this woman who held all the power of the Phoenix Cry Empire.

She only appeared around thirty-seven or thirty-eight years old, but it was said that she was actually over fifty. Despite being called the Empress Dowager, she was not the blood mother of the Emperor, but the actual mother of the crown prince.

Since the Emperor had stayed in seclusion for so long, the chancellors finally decided that continuing to call her the Empress was becoming inappropriate. Since the crown prince had come of age now, he was set to ascend the throne the next year.

Therefore, her title had changed from Empress to Empress Dowager.[1]

With the ladies' support, she slowly walked over to the central seat and sat down.

The seven princes also came out in succession, sitting beside the Empress Dowager. This was the first time Long Chen had seen all the princes together.

He looked over them one by one. He had seen the crown prince before, and he also recognized the seventh prince. The current seventh prince had become much better behaved now and didn't dare to mess around as much as he used to.

Long Chen finally found the one he was most interested in: the fourth prince. It went without saying that the fourth prince was very handsome. His face always had a modest smile that was very friendly and powerful.

Looking over his surroundings, Long Chen noticed that many of the young women were already infatuated with this handsome prince.

Long Chen shook his head at the other princes. Although they were all very grand, the arrogance in their eyes could not be hidden.

Naturally, he thought of Chu Yao at this time. Amongst these princes, how many of them weren't wearing masks? Or more accurately, were they all wearing masks? And just how many masks were they wearing?

A sneer appeared on his lips. The more power the royalty held, the more difficult they would be to deal with when they were corrupted. It would be better to have them lead some wars and have them feel a bit of pain along with their people.

Long Chen turned his nose up at those people who had killed others in secret without actually touching blood. If they had such intentions, then why didn't they just focus on increasing their own strength through cultivating?

"Grandmaster Yun Qi has arrived!"

What surprised Long Chen was that grandmaster Yun Qi actually appeared at the chairs. His appearance immediately caused a commotion.

This was the first time a person like grandmaster Yun Qi had ever come to the Phoenix Cry Lantern Festival.

As soon as grandmaster Yun Qi walked up, the Empress Dowager quickly stood up and paid her respects to him.

“Greetings grandmaster.”

“This old man doesn’t deserve such courtesy from Empress Dowager.” Grandmaster Yun Qi also gave her a half-bow of respect.

After the two of them had greeted each other, grandmaster Yun Qi seated himself. His seat was right next to the Empress Dowager and at the exact same height, showing just how high his status was.

His gaze roved around the crowd, and he nodded slightly when he saw Long Chen practically hiding in the corner.

This slight movement of his immediately drew everyone’s attention. Following Yun Qi’s gaze, they immediately found Long Chen.

“Looks like the rumors are true; Long Chen really has been recognized by grandmaster Yun Qi. He might have already become his apprentice.”

Some people couldn’t help but sigh. It seemed like just moments ago that Long Chen had been a bullied trash, but now his life had completely changed with grandmaster Yun Qi’s recognition. He had actually become a highly revered Pill Apprentice.

Long Chen cursed when he saw grandmaster Yun Qi nod his head at him. As he expected, everyone immediately looked over at him.

He had no desire to become the focus of everyone’s attention, but now it was too late to be low-key.

Long Chen rose up and bowed towards grandmaster Yun Qi. Seeing that, the Empress Dowager smiled, “Looks like grandmaster’s closed heart has finally been moved after all these years. Are you planning on passing down your legacy?”

The crowd immediately quieted. It was rumored that grandmaster Yun Qi was extremely prideful and would never take an apprentice within his life. They were all curious as to what he would reply.

“This child has a great future ahead of him. I truly do hope he becomes my apprentice,” replied grandmaster Yun Qi lightly.

Although he didn’t exactly say it explicitly, his words still shocked everyone. He was such a prideful man that almost no one had ever heard him praise someone.

For him to look so highly upon Long Chen, then just how important was Long Chen to him? Countless theories popped up in people's minds.

"I must assume Long Chen is an extremely talented alchemist, or an ordinary Pill Apprentice would not be able to enter your gaze like that," said the fourth prince.

Yun Qi looked at the fourth prince and laughed, "Being a talented alchemist is just one part of it. The most important thing is perseverance. Fourth prince's perseverance is also very admirable."

He smiled, "You overpraise me, grandmaster."

The fourth prince no longer continued to talk after this. Long Chen's keen senses noticed that his expression had changed ever so slightly.

"Was it because of what grandmaster Yun Qi implied?" Long Chen couldn't help wondering.

"Grandmaster Wei Cang, prince Changfeng, and princess Baichi have arrived!"

Following this announcement, Xia Changfeng, Xia Baichi, and a forty-year-old, thin, bearded man wearing a Pill Master's robe walked out.

His robe had an exquisite pill cauldron sown in over the abdominal area. The cauldron had three lines on it, marking him as a Pill Master.

Long Chen also had such an alchemist robe, but the quality of his robe was much inferior, and there was only one line on his cauldron.

One line signified Pill Apprentice, two lines a Pill Adept, and three lines a Pill Master. Long Chen narrowed his eyes; just who was this person? Why would he appear here?

"Yun Qi, after not seeing you for so many years, it seems as if you've aged quite a bit," said Wei Cang.

The entire plaza became completely silent once he said this. Grandmaster Yun Qi was revered highly within the Phoenix Cry Empire and no one would dare say such a thing to him.

"Wei Cang, did you finally leave the Grand Xia because you're dying and want to see more of the world?" replied grandmaster Yun Qi.

"Even if I was dying, it'd be better than my wife dying. And my wives have become more numerous over these years." Wei Cang laughed. Whether it was intentional or not was unknown, but Xia Baichi hugged Wei Cang's arm and pressed her body close against his.

Long Chen's gaze darkened when he noticed that Xia Baichi was wearing the exact same clothes as the woman in the picture Yun Qi had shown him.

If he hadn't guessed wrong, then this old ghost was most likely Yun Qi's enemy, and maybe even the death of his wife had been related to him.

He was clearly attacking grandmaster Yun Qi and was using Xia Baichi as a sharp weapon. Fury rose within Long Chen.

Although he hadn't had much contact with grandmaster Yun Qi, he knew that he was a peaceful person who was open and honest with others. He was an elder worthy of respect, and for him to be schemed against by someone like this caused him to recklessly shout the following:

"You're just a dying old stick. Take care for the day that you keel over during sex."

The plaza was originally deathly silent, so Long Chen's voice rang out clearly in every single person's ears. Everyone turned to look at Long Chen in shock.

"You bold peasant, how dare you be so rude to this grandmaster!" Xia Baichi glared at Long Chen angrily.

"Do you think I care about being rude to an old pervert drowning in lust?" retorted Long Chen disdainfully.

Following what Long Chen implied, the crowd turned to look at Xia Baichi. Wei Cang's hand was already all over her chest.

She quickly shook off the hand and glared at Long Chen. She pointed at Long Chen angrily but merely stuttered, unable to say anything.

"Are all your Phoenix Cry noble sons this lacking in upbringing?" snorted Wei Cang coldly.

Before the Empress Dowager could say anything, Yun Qi indifferently said, "Long Chen is already a Pill Apprentice of my alchemist guild."

"Did you hear that old bastard? This lord is a member of the guild. But what are you?" said Long Chen.

"Idiot, grandmaster Wei Cang is the chairman of our Grand Xia's alchemist guild," retorted Xia Baichi angrily.

"Oh, so he wasn't from here; good, I was confused about that. Our Phoenix Cry land is so fertile, there's no way such a quacking old lecher could come from it," Long Chen sighed in relief.

This sentence of his made everyone want to laugh, but they couldn't. But they also couldn't keep it down, so the smart ones all lowered their heads.

Some people didn't react in time and actually let out a choked laugh before covering their mouth. But that was even more embarrassing for Wei Cang than if people had just outright laughed.

The atmosphere of the plaza became extremely awkward. The ones who had it the worst weren't the people down below, but the princes. They couldn't laugh for fear of offending, and they also had nowhere to hide, so their attempts at stifling their laughter were the most difficult.

"Cough, today is a holiday, so grandmaster Wei Cang, please come up and sit. The festivities will soon start." The Empress Dowager also had it hard. Neither side could offend the other, so they had to come to a compromise.

"Fine." Wei Cang graciously accepted the offer. He coldly snorted at Yun Qi before slowly walking up to his spot. Once he sat down, he icily swept his gaze over Long Chen.

Was this old stick trying to intimidate him? Long Chen extended his fist towards him, his middle finger shooting up high. Everyone gasped at this act of his.

Wei Cang's face immediately turned green and killing intent overflowed from him. The Empress Dowager saw this and quickly shouted:

"Let the festivities begin!"

A melodious bell rang out. The waiting people started to illuminate the lanterns, turning the plaza as bright as it was in the daytime.

A string of huge lanterns appeared atop the stage.

Chapter 36 The Princess's Heart

Translator: BornToBe

The huge lanterns represented eight petals. Eight maidens carefully supported them, and when the eight petals folded together, they created a massive lotus.

Suddenly, the lotus bloomed and the center of the flower shook slightly. Only now did people realize that there was a beautiful woman in the center.

The entire crowd cheered when she appeared. That was the Phoenix Cry Empire's first princess. Long Chen found that she really was pretty good and worthy of praise.

Raising her hand, two lines of poetry appeared. The top one: the Heavens protect Phoenix Cry; the bottom one: let the Nation prosper, it's People at peace. The entire crowd burst into cheers.

Long Chen smiled slightly. Being a nation's princess was also pretty sorrowful. It was like having to live your whole life as a cricket in a jar.

That was a life of hidden fighting all day and night. But thinking about himself, he had also ended up in a life like that.

If you didn't suppress others, then you would simply be trampled on. Being stepped on by those above you was whatever, but more importantly, they would crush you firmly to death.

Whether this had to do with enmity, right and wrong, etc., didn't matter; perhaps this struggle was just the most primitive of man's nature.

As Long Chen was sighing over this, the second princess appeared. Due to his absent-mindedness, he ended up not catching a glimpse of her, something he regretted.

But the next one was Chu Yao's lantern. He kept his eyes wide open, afraid to miss a single detail.

First, a few fireworks lit up the sky, accompanied by cheering.

Then immediately after, a huge dragon kite whistled through the air.

At the same time, beside the huge dragon was a colorful phoenix with gorgeous wings. Golden powder sprinkled from its wings, just as if a real phoenix had descended upon the earth.

"Wow, how beautiful!"

Along with the scattering powder, the dragon and phoenix shone, making it seem as if everyone had entered a world of legends.

They slowly fluttered down to the earth. From the dragon's mouth came a large sphere of white light that burst open, sending streamers flying.

From those ribbons, a beautiful woman dressed in ancient costume slowly appeared, shapely and leisurely, a beauty that made you never want to stop looking at her.

The entire crowd erupted in acclaim when the third princess appeared. Many of the young men had heard of the third princess's beauty before. Hers was a beauty that could cause the downfall of an empire. Today, they finally got to see her in person, and for a moment, all that could be heard were fanatic screams.

Long Chen was also struck foolish for a moment upon seeing her. This was the first time Long Chen had seen her dressed up so beautifully.

Her eyes wandered over the crowd. Suddenly, her eyes brightened when she saw Long Chen, and she tossed a small ball which slowly flew out towards him.

Long Chen reached out his hand to catch it and found that the ball had a small tag on it.

The entire crowd immediately went silent, all of them staring at Long Chen. The Empress Dowager was also startled, but she didn't say anything.

But the person whose expression was most unsightly was definitely the Grand Xia's Xia Changfeng. Although he tried to appear natural and at ease, his uncontrollable anger turned his face green.

The Empress Dowager had already decided to marry off Chu Yao to Xia Changfeng, but her display today of the dragon and phoenix had obvious significance. Moreover, that ball was thrown directly towards Long Chen.[1]

Normally, a ball didn't have any special meaning, but that was not the same when added with the display of the lanterns. It was the same exact custom as in ancient times when maidens threw embroidered balls to pick their husband.

Despite doing his best to control himself, Xia Changfeng could not stop his body from trembling and his veins popping.

"Changfeng, endure it." Wei Cang glanced at Xia Changfeng.

"Don't worry grandmaster, Changfeng will restrain himself." Xia Changfeng nodded, but his voice still trembled in a way that could not be concealed.

Xia Changfeng wished for Long Chen to die more than anything right now. Long Chen also felt everyone's peculiar gazes on him.

Amongst the people present, grandmaster Yun Qi was the only one to smile slightly here. Everyone else had either complicated or jealous gazes.

Long Chen looked at Chu Yao and her beautiful, leisurely smile. She gestured towards the ball in his hand.

Long Chen realized that it was actually a firework, so he pulled its tag and threw it high into the sky.

A gorgeous light lit up the entire plaza. When the light rays faded, two phrases appeared in the sky.

The Dragon swims across the four oceans; the Phoenix flies throughout the nine lands.

Xia Changfeng was no longer able to control himself at all and ended up crushing the teacup in his hand.

“Long Chen, if I don’t crush you into a thousand pieces, then I wouldn’t be Xia Changfeng! As for you Chu Yao, I’ll make you live a life worse than death, you slut!”

Chu Yao’s actions humiliated him even more than if she had viciously slapped him in the face.

The Empress Dowager’s expression was also extremely ugly. She had never expected Chu Yao to actually be so bold and express affection for a man in such a public manner.

Long Chen was also speechless as he looked at the distant Chu Yao. Her pretty face was completely red, but it was still filled with determination.

Tears slowly flowed out when she looked at Long Chen, causing him to feel pain for her. What was she despairing of now? Was this her way of expressing herself one final time before facing death?

Seeing Chu Yao’s smiling face covered in tears, Long Chen’s mind buzzed blankly. He suddenly stood and roared, “Seas of blood may block us, but we will never give up our path; Dragon and Phoenix will both live to old age!”

Long Chen’s angry roar rang out in every single person’s ears. His roar held an incredibly resolute determination, a willpower that would rather die than submit.

Chu Yao shook, her hands covering her mouth, her tears slowly flowing. She had not had such aspirations; she had just wanted to express her true feelings once before her doom so that Long Chen understood her heart.

But wasn’t Long Chen’s response just now just sinking himself into her own demise? She was both moved and regretful that she had harmed him.

“The third princess is tired. Come and support her off the stage.” The Empress Dowager was resisting her fury as best as she could.

Five bodyguards came, and just as they were inviting Chu Yao to leave with them, grandmaster Yun Qi spoke out. "Empress Dowager, this isn't right. It's a good thing for young people to have emotions. Come, Chu Yao, sit beside this old man."

The Empress Dowager's expression changed; who would have imagined grandmaster Yun Qi who never participated in worldly affairs would actually get involved in imperial matters?

Chu Yao rejoiced when she heard grandmaster Yun Qi's words. Perhaps he couldn't save her from her doom, but she did think that he was capable of protecting Long Chen.

Thinking of that, she bent down to kneel in front of him. But before she could, grandmaster Yun Qi reached out a hand, and a gentle force pulled her back up.

"Child, there's no need for this etiquette." He pulled Chu Yao over to his side to sit.

But the strange thing in other people's eyes was that despite being at extreme odds with him, Wei Cang only looked on coldly without saying a single thing.

The Empress Dowager was extremely infuriated inside, but she didn't want to offend Yun Qi over such a small matter. Without the support of the alchemist guild, then no matter how strong the royal family was, they would quickly collapse. Therefore, she could only restrain herself.

But as the Empress Dowager, her thinking and schemes were profound. Her expression didn't change and she merely smiled, "Then, let the festivities continue."

Shi Feng finally stood up beside Long Chen. Stretching, he laughed, "Looks like it's finally time for me to get on stage."

In previous years, the battle between noble sons for the number one junior warrior would begin as soon as the princesses' lanterns were lit.

"Please wait a moment, Empress Dowager. This old man came all the way over from the Grand Xia just to attend your lantern festival, and I brought a special event just for you," said Wei Cang hurriedly.

"Oh? Grandmaster's event will definitely be marvelous to see." The Empress Dowager paused for a moment before smiling.

"This is my apprentice who is only seventeen this year. But she's already a true and tested Pill Apprentice." Wei Cang particularly emphasized 'true and tested'.

Everyone naturally looked at Long Chen. Anyone who wasn't an idiot would understand; he was making indirect accusations that Long Chen was a fake.

Most people had no idea just how Long Chen's Pill Apprentice status had been obtained. There were many people who had doubts about his true strength. Long Chen had refined pills for others to see just once before, but that had happened internally within the guild, so the outside world still didn't know anything about it. The majority of people felt that Long Chen had just managed to sneak his way in and didn't necessarily have any true skills when it came to alchemy.

Due to his old status as a cripple having hanged around him for too long and how quickly he had risen recently, many people had suspicions that he might have some sort of powerful support behind him, and that support was very likely grandmaster Yun Qi.

But no matter how amazing grandmaster Yun Qi was, how could he turn a cripple into a Pill Apprentice in just a short two months?

A ridiculing smile appeared on Long Chen's face when he heard this.

Yun Qi also didn't say anything. Wei Cang continued, "Today, let's let my apprentice give a display of how an alchemist refines."

The crowd cheered; alchemists were extremely revered, and most of the people present had never seen the process of refining pills personally.

They were filled with both great respect and curiosity towards this profession. Personally witnessing the process through which a pill was formed was definitely a great opportunity for them.

"But actually, this can be even more enjoyable. Baichi can represent my Grand Xia's alchemist guild. I wonder if there is anyone from the same generation within the Phoenix Cry alchemist guild who would like to join her?" Wei Cang glanced at grandmaster Yun Qi.

"She's your apprentice, but Long Chen isn't my apprentice. So your little hidden challenge doesn't mean anything," said Yun Qi indifferently.

Long Chen's heart shook; was the reason Yun Qi never took him in as an apprentice related to Wei Cang?

"It's just playing around. It'll also liven things up here, so it's not useless."

Wei Cang then produced a see-through bottle which actually held a thumb-sized flame that was constantly burning.

"This beast flame comes from a second rank Magical Beast, the Flame Leopard. Whoever wins will be awarded it."

Xia Baichi also looked longingly towards that beast flame. She had actually wanted it for a long time, but Wei Cang had always refused to give it to her.

That beast flame also posed an extremely great temptation to Long Chen.

“So, kid, do you want to come up and play?”

Many people were shaking their heads inside at how obvious the provocation was. Wei Cang’s conduct didn’t suit his status as a grandmaster.

As they suspected, Long Chen was smiling at Wei Cang in contempt. But shockingly, he still spat out a single word:

“Fine.”

Fatty Yu and the others couldn’t help gasping. Brother Long, what are you doing?

In front of everyone’s strange gazes, Long Chen walked up to the stage and said to Xia Baichi:

“You heard your master. So just how should I play with you?”

Chapter 37 Pill Battle

Translator: BornToBe

“You heard your master. So just how should I play with you?”

Everyone was flabbergasted at his words. Fatty Yu, Shou Hou, and the others’ jaws all dropped to the ground. “Damn, brother Long really is brother Long. Just one sentence of his can choke the whole crowd.”

Xia Baichi’s face was ashen from rage, and her eyes glared daggers at him; if looks could kill, then Long Chen would already have been turned to pulp.

Grandmaster Yun Qi’s expression was odd, and he shook his head slightly. But he was relaxed inside; Long Chen was actually helping him relieve his own anger. Was this what it meant for evil people to attract retribution?

“This rascal!” Chu Yao’s face was completely red. This Long Chen was too crude! Seeing Xia Baichi trembling from her anger, she wondered if she would even have the energy left to refine later.

“Kid, must you be so boorish? The old man only asked you up here for a small competition,” said Wei Cang angrily. He truly wanted to give this youngster a slap on the face.

"I'll stop. Do I get that if I win?" Long Chen pointed to the bottle in Wei Cang's hand, sounding a bit undetermined if he should participate.

"Hmph, naturally this old man's words are true. I definitely won't renege out of this," snorted Wei Cang.

Xia Baichi finally calmed herself down enough. Gritting her teeth, she spat out, "You must be dreaming if you think you can beat me. If you lose, I want you to kneel down and kowtow to me three times. Then, you'll crawl to me and lick my feet clean."

Xia Baichi's voice shocked everyone. From her angry words, they suspected that there was a great deal of enmity between the two of them.

They suddenly realized that Wei Cang's arrival here was definitely not a coincidence. Apparently, it was to target Long Chen and grandmaster Yun Qi.

Xia Baichi's terms were far too malicious. No person would accept such a thing.

Wei Cang had personally said that Xia Baichi was his apprentice, so her pill arts must definitely be shocking.

But Long Chen's pill arts were something no one had ever seen before. Whether he could truly refine pills was still doubtful.

Even if he knew how to refine pills, just how long had he known grandmaster Yun Qi? How much could he have learned in two months? It was unlikely for him to have gained even a superficial understanding!

Chu Yao's face was pale now with worry. Although she hadn't known Long Chen for long, she could sense that Long Chen's pride had seeped into his bones. Even in death, he wouldn't accept such humiliation.

"Long Chen, since you aren't my apprentice, you don't need to jump into this trap," Yun Qi warned him. He was very clear that Long Chen hadn't gained his inheritance.

"I know it's a trap... but... the bait is just too tempting." Long Chen appeared unwilling to give up, his face knotted in contradiction.

Fatty Yu and the others almost vomited blood. Brother Long, if you know it's a trap, then why are you accepting?

Everyone's expressions were strange; was Long Chen actually stupid, or was he just acting stupid?

He hesitated for a moment, before saying, "I accept, but I have another condition."

Seeing Long Chen's acceptance, Xia Baichi sneered and ridicule flashed in Wei Cang's eyes.

"Fine, what's your condition?"

"If I win, I don't want to get her as a bride. With her relations with you, I'd be afraid of getting a disease," said Long Chen.

"Long Chen... I'll kill you!" Xia Baichi's rage was exploding. Her originally pretty features were completely twisted into an extremely frightful visage.

"Long Chen..." Wei Cang was clenching his fists tightly, the veins on his forehead bulging. Despite being calm all the way until now, he actually started to tremble in fury.

"Old fellow, you didn't get a blood clot in your head, did you?" asked Long Chen worriedly.

Wei Cang was a monster who had lived for who knew how many years. His restraint exceeded Long Chen's expectations, and he actually quickly suppressed his anger with a snort.

"This pill battle will be decided with the Blood Condensing Pill. The medicinal ingredients must be prepared on your own, and you can have at most three portions. We'll start in fifteen minutes."

After stating the rules, he returned to his seat. He had actually become a bit afraid of Long Chen. That bastard's ability to anger people was definitely heaven-defying. He was actually afraid of losing his control and slaughtering him in his fury.

Xia Baichi's medicinal ingredients had naturally already been prepared by Wei Cang. As for Long Chen, he could only rely on grandmaster Yun Qi. This time, Wei Cang was using Xia Baichi to disgrace Long Chen and also Yun Qi. Yun Qi would definitely not look on without lifting a finger.

"Grandmaster, can you please lend me the medicinal ingredients?" Long Chen spread his hands.

"Long Chen, you have to think about this carefully," warned grandmaster Yun Qi solemnly.

"Grandmaster, I did this all for myself. Don't worry, I am sure of myself," said Long Chen.

"Then, fine." Although he had some concerns, seeing how determined Long Chen was, he merely nodded. He had a Pill Apprentice go back to the guild to get the medicinal ingredients.

The Blood Condensing Pill was a second tier medicinal pill. It was a precious pill for Blood Condensation experts that allowed them to break through the minor levels and was very expensive.

The ingredients to refine it weren't particularly rare. The most expensive main ingredient of it was the Blood Spirit Fruit.

The pill's quality was mostly dependant on the purifying of the Blood Spirit Fruit. It had a great deal of impurities within and purifying it was difficult. If the flame's temperature increased just slightly, then it would immediately burn into ashes.

But if the flame wasn't strong enough, then the impurities wouldn't be separated out, which had a huge effect on the pill's quality. It could be said that the Blood Condensing Pill was extremely difficult to refine, even amongst second tier pills.

Moreover, refining in front of a crowd was even more troublesome. Although three sets of medicinal ingredients sounded like three chances, it was still extremely risky for a pill with as high a failure rate as the Blood Condensing Pill.

Both parties finished preparing very quickly. Two small refining stages were set up atop the martial arena. The whole crowd would be able to see both of them very clearly as they refined.

"Let the competition begin. You both get two hours. After two hours, whoever has refined the higher quality Blood Condensing Pill will be the winner."

With the start of the competition, Long Chen and Xia Baichi both walked to their respective stages and placed their medicinal ingredients on top of it.

Long Chen suddenly blinked. A very conspicuous plump fruit was sitting on her pill stage.

"A Blood Spirit Fruit that's over a hundred years old?"

Long Chen was startled. It appeared Xia Baichi had truly come prepared. Two of his Blood Spirit Fruits were only thirty years old, and the best one he had available was only fifty years old.

"Hmph, it's already been said that the medicinal ingredients would be prepared by yourself. You can only blame your guild for being too poor." Xia Baichi coldly laughed at him when she saw him looking over.

Grandmaster Yun Qi's expression sunk slightly. "Even after all these years, you still use these underhand methods."

Grandmaster Yun Qi's words weren't targeted to anyone in particular, almost as if he was speaking to himself. But Wei Cang still coldly laughed, "The winner is the king while the loser is nothing; all I care about are the final results. It was you guys who were careless. Who else can you blame?"

"Grandmaster, did they mess around with the ingredients?" Although Chu Yao couldn't tell the age of the Blood Spirit Fruits, she still caught onto a couple of clues from their exchange.

Yun Qi nodded. "Their Blood Spirit Fruits are all over three hundred years old. The essence refined from them will be extremely pure which will definitely increase the refined pill's quality."

"Then isn't that very disadvantageous for Long Chen?" asked Chu Yao worriedly.

Their opponents were already ahead before the refinement even began. Chu Yao couldn't help being worried. Grandmaster Yun Qi sighed, "It's my fault, I underestimated how thick Wei Cang's skin was."

For a moment, the entire crowd was restless. Grandmaster Yun Qi's words weren't quiet, and the people nearby all heard it clearly.

But grandmaster Wei Cang also wasn't wrong. The ingredients were self-supplied, so it was their own fault.

"Do you guys think brother Long will be okay?" asked Shou Hou worriedly.

"What a joke. Who do you think brother Long is? Just watch and see." Fatty Yu was actually filled with confidence.

Long Chen saw that Xia Baichi was already busy with her own refining. However, he was just standing there, not preparing his ingredients nor warming up the cauldron.

"Hmph, have you given up? Just wait to lick my toes."

Seeing Long Chen was completely motionless, she thought Long Chen had been too intimidated to continue. She raised her hand, and a pale yellow flame puffed into existence.

Although Xia Baichi definitely didn't get a high ranking on the scale of personality, her Pill Flame's quality was actually quite high.

She was definitely at the peak of all Pill Apprentices. It was no wonder she was so confident and dared to throw out such a bait.

However, Long Chen had already been attracted by that bait. That Flame Leopard's beast flame wasn't particularly high ranking in terms of beast flames, but it was at least ten times better than his current Pill Flame.

If he could refine that Flame Leopard's beast flame, then it would be of definite assistance to him. He would be able to refine the top grade Starfusing Pill that Chu Yao was in dire need of.

That was because the foreign energies in her body had been there for too long. It was as if a seed had already sprouted into a huge tree. It required the top grade Starfusing Pill in order to completely refine those energies.

This was something Long Chen was very aware of. That was also why he had accepted this pill battle despite knowing it was a trap. It was as he had said: the bait was just too enticing.

Xia Baichi's movements were very smooth and fluid as she finished warming up her cauldron. Each step was completed without the slightest hesitation.

Wei Cang smiled and stroked his beard, his eyes filled with confidence.

"Baichi is worth cultivating. If she can refine a Blood Condensing Pill today that isn't too low in quality, then she can be promoted to Pill Adept."

The Blood Condensing Pill was one of the requirements to be promoted to Pill Adept. If she could refine it in front of this many people, then it would express to everyone here that Xia Baichi could advance in ranks.

"This is all due to grandmaster's training. Grandmaster has just arrived and must be tired. Changfeng has already found a place for you to rest," said Xia Changfeng.

After saying that, he whispered in a voice that only the two of them could hear, "Changfeng has also found two beautiful twin sisters for grandmaster that haven't been broken in yet."

The solemn Wei Cang immediately lit up at that, but he quickly suppressed it. In a normal voice, he said, "I just need to randomly rest a bit. There's no need for such a thing."

"I know grandmaster doesn't want such a thing. But wouldn't it be nice of you to let the people who worship you to have such a chance?" smiled Xia Changfeng.

But inside he was cursing: you old lecher, your lust is something everyone under the heavens knows about, yet you still put on such a fake act.

“Haha, just let someone set that up. My heart’s not up to such a thing,” said Wei Cang.

Your heart’s not up to such a thing? Of course not, because you’d rather force yourself on them. Xia Changfeng muttered inside for a while when his expression suddenly went rigid as he noticed Xia Baichi had begun to refine the Blood Spirit Fruit.

The success of the Blood Condensing Pill was largely related to the Blood Spirit Fruit. If you could extract the pure essence out, then it would increase the probability of success greatly.

Xia Baichi carefully placed the Blood Spirit Fruit inside her cauldron and slowly increased the Pill Flame’s temperature. In truth, this was the first time she had refined such an aged Blood Spirit Fruit, so she didn’t dare to be careless.

“AHH! HEY!! AHH!!”

What shocked everyone was that at such a crucial moment when the entire plaza was silent, Long Chen suddenly started to yell and shout.

BANG!

Xia Baichi’s hand shook and her Pill Flame sharply increased, causing that Blood Spirit Fruit to immediately turn to ashes.

The entire plaza turned deathly silent as they gazed in shock at Long Chen.

Chapter 38 Lose

Translator: BornToBe

BANG!

“LONG CHEN!!!”

A furious scream pierced through everyone’s ears. It sounded like an evil ghoul was demanding for their lives, causing everyone’s hair to stand on end.

That sound had come from Xia Baichi’s mouth. She was exceptionally malevolent and sinister now; her face twisted as she glared at Long Chen.

That had been the critical moment in the refinement of the Blood Spirit Fruit. She had been trying to find the perfect temperature to purify it.

But with Long Chen’s shocking cries, her flame had burst out of her control. By the time she managed to put it back under her control, it was too already late, and an extremely

precious three-hundred-year-old Blood Spirit Fruit had turned to ashes just like that. Her heart dripped blood.

“Haha, my bad. My habit is to warm up my throat before refining pills. I was afraid to scare you, so I shouted several times to tell you that I was about to start refining. Truly unfortunate.” Long Chen acted completely apologetic.

It was intentional, so intentional. Even a blind person could tell. Xia Baichi was practically spitting flames from her eyes.

But she had no way to contradict Long Chen. There was no rule which said that the opponent couldn't make noise. This time, she had suffered a great loss.

“Focus!” Wei Cang coldly shouted, and only then did Xia Baichi slowly suppress her anger. If she didn't calm herself, she might really lose.

“I'm very focused. No need to worry about it,” replied Long Chen coldly. “Idiot sister, you should continue refining. Next time, I'll do my best to keep my voice down for you, alright?”[1]

Xia Baichi no longer bothered with Long Chen. With an ashen expression, she took out her second set of medicinal ingredients from her spatial ring. She then plugged her ears so that she wouldn't have to worry about Long Chen scaring her again.

What caused him to be speechless was that she actually took out a second extremely aged Blood Spirit Fruit; her many preparations truly caused Long Chen to be depressed.

And since she was already on guard against him, it would be difficult to make her fail again. He could only resign himself to his bad luck.

Long Chen raised his hand and a yellow flame soared into existence. What caused Wei Cang's pupils to shrink was that Long Chen's flame was actually not that much weaker than Xia Baichi's.

Grandmaster Yun Qi was also slightly startled when he saw Long Chen's Pill Flame. That Pill Flame was several times stronger than from the last time he had seen him refining pills.

“Haha, just like I said, brother Long definitely won't have any troubles. See, he also has a flame in his hand.” Fatty Yu was very pleased with himself.

Even for them, it was their first time seeing Long Chen condensing a Pill Flame. They became much more at ease; this meant that Long Chen was a true Pill Apprentice.

His Pill Flame startled many people; although they had been told of his identity as a Pill Apprentice, they had still doubted it. Seeing his Pill Flame in person put out many of those doubts.

Could he really have become a Pill Apprentice in just two months without any previous foundation? They were filled with veneration as they looked at the settled and stable grandmaster Yun Qi.

Yun Qi bitterly laughed inside. Only he himself knew that Long Chen's pill refining arts weren't taught by him. It seemed that Long Chen had many secrets surrounding him.

Chu Yao watched as Long Chen condensed his Pill Flame. After stabilizing the flame, he started to warm up the cauldron. His movements were very at ease and his expression was calm, letting her extremely nervous heart relax quite a bit.

Xia Baichi had once more steadied herself and was steadily purifying her Blood Spirit Fruit. Long Chen had an urge to shout out to her once more, but thinking about how low his chance of success would be this time, plus the shaming ridicule from others, he decided to give that up and start refining his own Blood Spirit Fruit.

His Blood Spirit Fruit was only at the size of a longan and much inferior compared to the fist-sized three-hundred-year-old Blood Spirit Fruits of Xia Baichi's.

Not only was the size different, but the purity of the essence within was much inferior. It could be said that Long Chen was behind before the competition had even started. This was definitely unfair.

He could only do his best to discard the impurities within his Blood Spirit Fruit. In terms of final pill quality, he was already a step behind. He would have to make up for it in other areas.

Suddenly, his flame exploded in strength. His Pill Flame filled the entire pill furnace and the terrifying flame gave everyone a scorching feeling.

"What a powerful Spiritual Strength."

Even Wei Cang was surprised. Long Chen was using his Spiritual Strength as the fuel for his Pill Flame and had even split a portion of it to protect the Blood Spirit Fruit's essence so that it wouldn't be lost. This kind of technique was extremely wild.

But after he recovered from his surprise, he sneered. It was true that his Spiritual Strength was very powerful, but his Blood Spirit Fruit was less than fifty years old, so how could he compare to the one that was over a hundred years old? Moreover, that was a three-hundred-year-old fruit.

Wasting this much Spiritual Strength at the early stage meant that he wouldn't have enough Spiritual Strength to seal the pill at the critical moment of pill condensation. This was a path of failure in Wei Cang's eyes. This was clearly not an expert's way of refining.

Only grandmaster Yun Qi wasn't surprised by Long Chen's action. He couldn't help lamenting at such a luxurious method though. Only Long Chen had the qualifications to use such a technique with his outrageously enormous Spiritual Strength.

Within Long Chen cauldron was a pile of red powder which he took out. The powder was very red and didn't have many spots within it, letting him relax a bit.

Those spots were impurities, but with his current flame strength, it was impossible to completely purify them. This was already the best he could do.

Looking at Xia Baichi's side, he saw that after she had plugged her ears, she had managed to completely ignore the rest of the world and was very efficient. There was also a pile of red powder beside her.

That was the Blood Spirit Fruit's medicinal essence. What caused Long Chen's eyes to shrink was that the three-hundred-year-old Blood Spirit Fruit was truly different from his. That powder was much brighter than his and had even less impurities.

He couldn't help but frown. No matter how great the refining techniques he had, he didn't dare display any of them. If that scoundrel Wei Cang noticed it, he would find it very fishy.

Right now, he had to take things one step at a time. If he really couldn't win normally, then he would throw caution to the wind and take some drastic measures. In any case, he definitely wouldn't lose.

Refining herb after herb, he realized that over half the time had passed. As for Xia Baichi, she had already sealed her furnace and begun refining the pill.

After sealing the furnace, it meant it was already finalized. Other than the final moment of condensing the pill, there were no other steps that were likely to fail.

"Long Chen, time's almost up. I really am looking forward to the time when you kneel in front of me." Xia Baichi had already taken out her earplugs and was coldly sneering at Long Chen.

Her sealed furnace only had to maintain a stable Pill Flame. In order to repay her grievance against him, she started to attempt disturbing him.

"I'm begging you, shut your mouth. The crap you spout will affect the quality of the air," said Long Chen.

“You!”

Xia Baichi’s anger caused her Pill Flame to jump ever so slightly, scaring her and forcing her to calm herself down. She didn’t dare speak again and even once more put on her earplugs.

She realized that in a battle of words, even ten thousand of her weren’t an equal to Long Chen. Right now, she focused all her energy on the pill. She looked forward to the moment when Long Chen would be humiliated in front of her.

Long Chen also sealed his furnace a short time later. The two of them were both urging their Pill Flames to increase the speed of forming the medicinal pill.

BANG! A quarter hour later, Xia Baichi’s pill furnace started to boom. The originally silent plaza immediately became excited.

Even though they hadn’t seen pills being refined before, they had all heard that when the pill was formed, strange events would occur with the pill furnace. This was clearly an omen of the pill forming.

The sound became louder and louder, and the furnace started to shake violently. With a cold shout, Xia Baichi slapped her hands onto her pill furnace, her Spiritual Strength pouring in.

BOOM!

A huge explosion rang out and then the pill furnace became completely silent. Xia Baichi was unable to suppress her own excitement.

With her rich pill refining experience, she was ninety percent sure that she had successfully refined it despite being a bit nervous inside.

Slowly reaching her hand into the furnace, a dense pill fragrance swept out and quickly spread throughout the plaza.

“What a dense fragrance!”

Many people were surprised, and Wei Cang was very pleased. Even without looking, he could tell that she had succeeded just from this fragrance.

“HAHAHAHA!!!”

Xia Baichi took out a round medicinal pill; her face was filled with feverish excitement. But due to her being too excited, her laugh sounded coarse and hard to listen to.

“Who stepped on your neck?” Long Chen glanced at Xia Baichi and asked with great concern.

Although she knew he was ridiculing her, she didn’t care. She coldly glared at him. “Kid, I’m waiting for you to kowtow to me, haha...”

Long Chen shook his head a couple of times and no longer said anything. But he really was alarmed inside. This crazy woman’s luck truly was too good. She had actually refined a middle grade Blood Condensing Pill. It was no wonder she had laughed so wildly.

There was an extremely faint pill line on her pill, and although it was extremely faint, there was no doubt that it was a pill line.

With Xia Baichi’s ability, the probability of her refining such a middle grade medicinal pill was definitely not over one percent.

Did the heavens favor idiots? Long Chen couldn’t help but curse inside. If it continued like this, then he really might lose. No, he had to think of a method.

At this time, Long Chen’s pill furnace was also starting to shake, meaning that his pill was also on the verge of forming. He had reached the most critical moment.

“Crap, I must win!”

Long Chen took a deep breath. In front of everyone’s shocked eyes, he slapped his hand atop the pill furnace and opened the lid slightly.

“What?!”

Yun Qi was completely shocked; at this critical moment when the pill was forming, you absolutely could not open the furnace’s lid! Otherwise, the medicinal nature inside would be lost!

Even Wei Cang was shocked. Long Chen’s actions were completely out of the ordinary for refining pills, but he appeared completely serious and it didn’t seem as if he was giving up.

At the same time as he opened the lid, Long Chen’s Spiritual Strength started to wildly circulate and tightly locked in the medicinal nature within the pill furnace.

BOOM BOOM BOOM!!!

The pill furnace was continuously emitting explosive sounds and sweat poured down on Long Chen's face. The medicinal pill within the furnace was acting like a struggling wild bull.

Long Chen used his Spiritual Strength to seal it, but the amount of Spiritual Strength being used was completely shocking.

Crap, I'm almost out of Spiritual Strength!

Long Chen suddenly felt a burst of fatigue. He shouted out, madly sending his Spiritual Strength out.

BOOM!

The entire martial arena shook along with the pill furnace. Long Chen closed and tightly pressed down on the furnace's lid.

Only when the pill furnace became still did Long Chen finally relax. His whole body was drenched in sweat. The amount of energy he had used just now had been too great.

Slowly opening the lid, the pill fragrance floated out. Looking at the medicinal pill within the furnace, Long Chen's expression suddenly changed.

Chapter 39 Obtaining the Beast Flame

Translator: BornToBe

Seeing Long Chen's expression change so suddenly, Chu Yao's heart sunk. Shi Feng, fatty Yu, and the others were also scared.

The cost of him losing was far too great. It was something hard to take even in death. But Xia Changfeng coldly smiled inside when he saw Long Chen's expression.

"Haha, Long Chen, what are you waiting for? Why aren't you coming over to kowtow yet?" Xia Baichi sneered at Long Chen, seeming extremely pleased with herself.

Being able to humiliate Long Chen was practically better than being promoted to Pill Adept for her! Her body couldn't help starting to shiver in anticipation.

Long Chen's face was extremely grave as he slowly took out a medicinal pill from the pill furnace. He regretfully said, "I wanted to be low-key, but the heavens wouldn't let me."

Only now did everyone see that Long Chen actually did have a round medicinal pill in his hand. They cursed at him for acting so dejected.

“That scoundrel.” Chu Yao was both surprised and delighted. She really had been scared witless for a moment back then.

“Heavens, I think I really might die. If it continues like this, then my heart won’t be able to take it.” Fatty Yu collapsed to the ground helplessly.

Only at this time did people realize that Long Chen had put up an act. This was especially true for Xia Baichi who felt as if she had been given a slap on the face.

“Long Chen, you dare to play me?” raged Xia Baichi.

“It’s just taking people for a little spin, so why are you so serious?” Long Chen said randomly.

“Hmph, Long Chen, even if you did refine the Blood Condensing Pill, you’ll still lose. That pill you refined is just low grade, while mine is middle grade.”

Xia Baichi raised her hand, showing off the pill line. All the nearby people could see it extremely clearly.

“Sister Baichi, you really are talented. You can already refine a middle grade second tier medicinal pill at such a young age. It really does make people admire you,” exclaimed the crown prince Chu Yang.

A Pill Adept this young was rarely seen, maybe seen only once every few decades. Such talent could definitely go far on the pill path.

Seeing her ridiculing face, Long Chen indifferently said, “Who won and who lost isn’t something decided by you.”

“Are you trying to quibble? My medicinal pill has a pill line, and yours doesn’t. Are you unable to see such an obvious difference?” sneered Xia Baichi.

“You’re absolutely right that yours is a middle grade medicinal pill. But the pill in my hand is also middle grade.” Long Chen raised the pill in his hand.

For Long Chen to put it like this shocked everyone. But after carefully examining it, it seemed as if the pill in his hand was absolutely ordinary. Although it was plump and round, there were no pill lines.

“Middle grade medicinal pill? Hmph, how come I can’t tell?” sneered Xia Baichi.

“I really do sympathize with you. So young, but your eyes are so blind. Who said that middle grade medicinal pills had to have pill lines?” sighed Long Chen.

Wei Cang's expression changed slightly at that. Shock appeared in his eyes, and he stared fixedly at the medicinal pill in Long Chen's hand.

Just now, he had felt that the pill was a bit strange. From what Long Chen said, he then thought of what he had done before forming the pill and immediately became a bit bewildered.

"Bring out the pill appraisal device!" Following grandmaster Yun Qi's instructions, a Pill Apprentice respectfully brought over a large apparatus.

It looked like a table and had a notch at the center for placing the medicinal pill. It had the best accuracy for appraising a medicinal pill's grade.

"Sixty percent essence; miss Baichi's medicinal pill meets the demands for a middle grade medicinal pill." The Pill Apprentice read out the device's reading.

If the essence constituted fifty percent of the pill, then it would count as low grade. Sixty percent would make it middle grade. Xia Baichi's Blood Condensing Pill had just barely made the grade.

"Long Chen, I truly want to know just what's so special about your 'middle grade' medicinal pill." Xia Baichi took back her pill and sneered at Long Chen.

She didn't believe that Long Chen's medicinal pill had truly reached the middle grade. Since there weren't any pill lines, who was he even trying to trick? This was just a final struggle.

"Then, have a good look."

Long Chen laughed and handed his medicinal pill to the Pill Apprentice. Any medicinal pills that were just refined would have a thin pill membrane covering it for six hours that could not be faked.

"Sixty-three percent essence; mister Long Chen's medicinal pill meets the demands for a middle grade medicinal pill." The Pill Apprentice read out the new reading.

"What?!"

Xia Baichi was stupefied to the point that even the pill in her hand dropped to the ground, her head completely blank; she had lost?

It wasn't just her; everyone else was also shocked, especially Wei Cang. Reading the number on the device, his face turned completely ashen.

Everything that had happened during the refining had been observed by him, so it was definitely no fake. Long Chen had actually refined a middle grade pill without any pill lines.

Usually, the medicinal grade of the pill was determined during the refining process. That was why Wei Cang had given Xia Baichi those three-hundred-year-old Blood Spirit Fruits. It could be said that she had been set in an invincible position.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have acted so grandly and used the Flame Leopard's beast flame as a prize. But now Xia Baichi had lost.

"No way, you despicable bastard. Long Chen, you definitely gave us a fake. You bought off the appraiser! I'll kill you!"

Xia Baichi suddenly shouted accusations and charged at him like a madwoman. Long Chen loathed to deal with her; as long as she came over, he would send her flying with a single kick.

"Baichi, stop. Don't make a scene." Wei Cang grabbed her and sternly warned her. He understood that their scheme today had ended in a complete and unexpected failure.

If he reneged on his words in front of this many people, he really would have no more face. So he had no choice but to stop her.

Bai Xiachi struggled wildly in Wei Cang's grasp. She shouted, "You old lecher, what did you say yesterday when you played with me on the bed? Didn't you say the Flame Leopard's beast flame would definitely belong to me? Give it to me!"

She mournfully shouted, her voice echoing throughout the plaza such that every single person heard it. Quite a few people shook their heads.

This Wei Cang truly was trash despite his grandmaster status. Before, it was just a rumor about his lecherousness. But now with Xia Baichi's words, there were none who didn't look down on him.

Wei Cang turned purple with rage and slapped Xia Baichi dizzy. "Baichi has become too upset and started to babble nonsense. Take her down."

After Xia Baichi was brought down, the entire plaza was silent. Long Chen glanced at Wei Cang and reached out his hand. "Hand it over."

Wei Cang's face was extremely unsightly, and his heart was bleeding. This Flame Leopard beast flame was extremely precious, and he really had prepared to leave it for Xia Baichi.

But he hadn't expected that his attempt to get an advantage over Yun Qi would end up making him suffer a huge loss. Instead of making Yun Qi lose face, he ended up losing his own precious treasure. But in front of this many people, he truly didn't have the face to renege.

"Take it."

Long Chen took the bottle. Inside, he saw a pulsing ball of flame and couldn't restrain from exclaiming in joy.

"Haha, thanks." This was the first time Long Chen felt that this old man was not bad.

"Can you tell me how you did this?" Wei Cang was unwilling inside; this time he had truly suffered a loss.

Long Chen hesitated for a moment, but seeing grandmaster Yun Qi also send him an encouraging gaze, he smiled, "Due to my respect for your age, I'll tell you: this is a secret art for refining pills. I saw it in Ke Gu's recording's which included this technique. When the pill is about to form, make a small opening and use one portion of Spiritual Strength to lock in the medicinal nature and another portion to expel the impurities. This allows you to purify it twice. Now, do you understand?"

"Ke Gu's recordings? Could you mean the Pill King Ke Gu?" Wei Cang was startled.

"I don't know. In any case, I saw it in a book. Find it for yourself." Long Chen shook his head. He wasn't telling the whole truth.

In order to not draw any suspicions, he had gone through many of the techniques recorded within the guild. Within them, there was truly the technique he had described, but Long Chen's technique wasn't exactly the same.

That technique said to make just one opening, but Long Chen had made two opening. One opening was used to expel impurities, while the other was used to absorb heaven and earth's spiritual energy. Otherwise, the spiritual qi within the cauldron would be insufficient for the pill to condense.

If only one opening was used, then the spiritual qi would only go out and not in. No matter how powerful your Spiritual Strength was, you would never be able to form the pill in the end and would end up with a pile of medicinal ashes.

Long Chen walked towards grandmaster Yun Qi and bowed. Yun Qi nodded; Long Chen's display today had completely surpassed his expectations.

At the same time, he admired Long Chen's courage that allowed him to dare to gamble despite such risks. Now that Long Chen had a beast flame, his Pill Flame would become at least ten times stronger once he refined it.

With a powerful Pill Flame as support and supplemented with his powerful Spiritual Strength, Long Chen's alchemy path would be completely flat and easy for him to tread upon.

Long Chen walked to Chu Yao. Looking at her charming face, he almost couldn't help but sink himself into her bosom.

Their display today had broken through any previous barriers between them, and their two hearts were much closer.

"I will definitely accomplish what I promised you. Believe me," said Long Chen quietly.

Chu Yao cutely nodded. Seeing his determination, she was filled with warmth and felt as if she was no longer alone.

Long Chen bowed slightly to the Empress Dowager before walking down the martial arena and returned to his own spot. He attracted everyone's gaze as he walked.

The women especially had shining eyes. Long Chen's display was coarse and wild. Moreover, he actually cursed right in front of grandmaster Wei Cang. This was both fresh and stimulating to them.

Then atop the refining stage, he had displayed that easy and calm refining technique of his. He had been completely unrestrained and had managed to counterattack beautifully at the last moment.

Such a person was someone they had never met before. He was completely novel. When Long Chen walked past them, many of the daring ones even tried to entice him.

Once he sat down, fatty Yu and the others all burst with excitement.

"Brother Long, you really are too strong!"

"Haha, now that I've obtained a beast flame, I guarantee that I will let you guys ascend to the Blood Condensation realm." Seeing their concern for him, Long Chen's heart was moved.

Although he had been atop the stage, he had seen everything occurring below the stage. So, all their emotions for him were something he had seen.

Fatty Yu and the others didn't have high cultivation bases. The stronger Long Chen became, the more assistance he would be able to offer them.

When Long Chen had been down, these people had always stayed with him. This feeling was very precious to Long Chen.

Just as they were talking, a burst of cheers suddenly rang out, and Long Chen and the others were roused. Shi Feng laughed:

“The real party has started!”

Chapter 40 Huang Chang's Challenge

Translator: BornToBe

Long Chen raised his head to look and saw a powerful youth standing atop the center of the martial arena. He was cupping his fist in all directions.

Long Chen didn't recognize this young man. But as soon as he had stepped on the stage, the crowd had cheered. It seemed he was somewhat famous in the capital.

At this time, Long Chen noticed that, even outside the plaza, there were countless people. Back before the lanterns were lit, there had been an area reserved only for the nobility, but now it was open to everyone.

There were no restrictions on status for the battle over the number one junior warrior. Looking at where the Empress Dowager was watching the battles, he noticed that there were now many more people over there as well. Amongst them was the Savage Marquis.

Those people tended to be on the older side, but their bodies were still surging with strength. They were Blood Condensation cultivators and a faint murderous aura came from their bodies. They were clearly true experts.

Long Chen was sizing those people up when another burst of cheering rang out. A man jumped up tens of meters and lightly landed on the martial arena, his figure appearing extremely at ease and confident.

“So it's Feng Yang!” Shi Feng was somewhat amazed when he saw that person.

“What, do you know him?” asked Long Chen.

“Yup, he's the same age as me. He joined the army two years ago. At that time, he was just at the third Heavenstage of Qi Condensation, but now he's at the eighth Heavenstage.”

To jump five minor realms in just a short two years truly was shocking to people.

“It’s not surprising. After joining the army, he must have gone through several missions and survived many life and death situations. This kind of speed is normal under those circumstances.” Long Chen nodded. “This Feng Yang is really not bad. Although his cultivation base isn’t high, that trace of murderous aura on his body isn’t something these people who grew up coddled can handle.”

While Long Chen and Shi Feng were talking, Feng Yang had already taken action and it truly was just as Long Chen said it would be.

Although the person who had come up ahead of him looked strong and had a similar cultivation base with Feng Yang, his true combat ability was a far cry from Feng Yang’s, and he was defeated in less than ten exchanges.

“On the martial path, just having a higher cultivation base doesn’t mean you have a higher combat ability. Sometimes, just an unstoppable, imposing manner will make the opponent lose confidence and become afraid of you. This will lead to their battle strength going down. That’s why, the further you walk along the martial path, the more you require a strong martial heart. That will allow you to overcome your obstacles and be undaunted by setbacks.” Long Chen patted Shi Feng’s shoulder.

“I know. I can die, but I cannot surrender.” Shi Feng nodded.

Long Chen smiled. Shi Feng’s talent was limited, and his cultivation path would be rough. But if he kept a steadfast heart, he really might be able to pull off a miracle one day.

Feng Yang consecutively beat three strong opponents before finally ended up being exhausted. In the end, he was sent flying by someone and had no choice but to concede.

“I’m going up now.”

“Oh, this early? Are you able to handle it?” Long Chen was a bit flabbergasted.

“I consider this contest a kind of training for myself. The results aren’t important. Instead, I need to firm my martial heart,” smiled Shi Feng.

“Nice, brother Shi. We’ll all be rooting for you from here!” Fatty Yu was especially excited, and the rest of them all wanted to see Shi Feng win.

“You got this!” Long Chen patted his shoulders.

“Shi Feng has come to ask advice!” Following Shi Feng’s shout, it was like thunder had clapped through the plaza, and the entire crowd emitted a huge cheer. Obviously, Shi Feng was pretty famous within the younger generation of the capital.

Fatty Yu and the others' yells were drowned out by a flood of cheering. It was so loud that they couldn't even hear their own voices. They looked at each other in dismay and awkwardness.

Shi Feng's face was dark and reserved. As he stood atop the stage, he gave people a sensation of being a large mountain that no man could shake.

He was fighting a ninth Heavenstage Qi Condensation expert, but when that person saw Shi Feng, he immediately turned into a statue.

"Come at me; I'll only use the power of the ninth Heavenstage of Qi Condensation." Shi Feng smiled slightly.

That person naturally couldn't help but to become angry at that provocation. Everyone was watching them, which put him on the spot.

"Hmph, who asked for your help?!" That person stamped on the ground and a punch came smashing towards Shi Feng. But Shi Feng didn't even deign to look at it.

"Isn't this Shi Feng too arrogant?"

Just as people thought Shi Feng had a huge ego, that person suddenly sent out a second punch towards his lower abdomen; the first one had actually just been a feint.

A large palm met that punch. Shi Feng grabbed onto that person's fist and started to apply some force.

"Time for you to go."

That person let out a startled cry as his body flew a dozen meters through the air. Eventually, he fell flat on his face.

After landing, he spat out some dirt and cursed a couple of times. He turned to leave, deciding to not even look at the rest of the battles.

"Brother Shi is formidable!"

Fatty Yu and the others took advantage of this moment to shout out this slogan. Following their shout, the crowd loudly cheered.

These cheers contained countless young maidens' cries as well. Long Chen smiled; no wonder so many people wanted to go up to fight. This was the best way for men to attract women.

Suddenly, Long Chen sensed a gaze coming at him from the seats above. Looking up, he saw that Chu Yao was staring at him.

He smiled and winked at her, causing her to immediately turn red and quickly lower her head. But joy filled her eyes.

However, neither Long Chen nor Chu Yao noticed that these small movements of theirs had been noticed by another person.

Xia Changfeng's face was ashen, and he suddenly whispered to a person beside him, "How was your scouting? Did you find his bottom line?"

"Your servant tested him. His cultivation base is extremely strange, and his true level could not be found. However, in terms of combat ability, he does not surpass early Blood Condensation," whispered that person.

If Long Chen were there, he would have immediately recognized this person's voice as being the person who had fake attempted to assassinate him.

"Hmph, that's good. Huang Chang, you must kill him today. Do your best not to disclose too much of your hidden strength," ordered Xia Changfeng coldly.

This Huang Chang was one of his bodyguards, the man with the scar on his face. Huang Chang cruelly smiled, "Don't worry master. He definitely won't survive the night."

Bang!

It went without saying that Shi Feng who had reached the Blood Condensation realm was unstoppable. He defeated eighteen people in a row, filling the crowd with excitement.

The last two people were also Blood Condensation experts, but in terms of combat strength, they were quite a bit weaker than him.

After all, Shi Feng had received Long Chen's assistance when breaking through to Blood Condensation, so his foundation was much firmer than the others, giving him a great advantage.

After defeating the last Blood Condensation expert, Shi Feng called out three times, but no one else came up.

According to the rules of the competition, the title of the Phoenix Cry's number one junior warrior had already landed within Shi Feng's lap.

Under the enthusiastic cries of the entire crowd, Shi Feng walked over to the Empress Dowager and knelt. The Empress Dowager bestowed upon him a jade medal and gave him a few encouraging words.

When he returned back down to the martial stage, the crowd became even more impassioned, and countless maidens surged over there, throwing flower loops over to Shi Feng's neck.

Each of those flower loops had been personally made by those maidens. It was a token for the man they admired. If that man picked it up, then it meant that the man accepted the maiden's heart.

Each flower loop had the maiden's name sewn onto it, so the man could easily figure out whose it was. The stronger a man was within the Phoenix Cry Empire, the more wives and concubines he would have. So rather than being the sole wife of a mediocre man, a great deal of maidens would prefer to marry a strong man who had many wives.

When Shi Feng returned, his body was covered with flower loops and only his head could be seen. He could barely see where he was going.

"Haha, congratulations Shi Feng!" Long Chen couldn't help laughing at that comical sight.

"This time you've struck rich Shi Feng!" Shou Hou was filled with admiration.

"Hmph, what riches. Shi Feng isn't some peddler. But brother Shi, make sure to get your affairs in order when you go back. No matter what, you have to pick a couple of good wives," laughed fatty Yu.

By giving those flower loops to him, those maidens had all expressed their willingness to marry him. As long as he assented and gave them a betrothal gift, they could immediately proceed to the wedding. It was extremely convenient.

Shi Feng turned red and said, "I was only able to do this because of Long Chen's assistance. How about we split these flower loops between us?"

Everyone choked when they heard that. Only Shi Feng would think of trying to divvy up such a thing.

Seeing everyone laugh, Shi Feng also realized what he had said. He played dumb, causing people to laugh even harder.

Normally, this would signify the end of the lantern festival. But just as people were preparing to leave, Xia Changfeng suddenly laughed:

"That battle just now truly was marvelous. But I still feel as if we haven't had our fill yet. I have a suggestion, but I don't know whether it's appropriate."

The Empress Dowager frowned slightly. Too many things had occurred today, and she didn't want to deal with anything else. But Xia Changfeng was a guest, so the Empress Dowager could not easily contradict him. "You can say what you want prince Xia."

"In order to add more fun, I'll also send a youngster from my side to exchange blows with your Phoenix Cry's top talent. Let's compare and see which one is stronger," laughed Xia Changfeng.

Before the Empress Dowager could say anything, Wei Cang interrupted, "The Grand Xia and the Phoenix Cry Empire are like a family, and it's just a friendly competition. I doubt the Empress Dowager would refuse."

The Empress Dowager only sighed in anger. They were clearly using their words to trap her. If she didn't agree, that would offend Wei Cang.

"Then, we'll listen to grandmaster, so we can see the grace of the Grand Xia's men. But I still don't know who is going on to the stage?"

"Huang Chang, you go. Remember to go easy and not ruin our friendship." Xia Changfeng waved his hand.

"Yes."

Huang Chang stepped lightly on the ground, and he shot through the air like a huge bird, gently landing on the stage.

"Grand Xia's Huang Chang inviting any Phoenix Cry geniuses to exchange pointers." Huang Chang cupped his hands.

"Is this a mistake? You already look so old, yet you act like a youth? Isn't your skin a bit too thick?" Long Chen fed some words to Shou Hou who shouted them out.

Huang Chang smiled. "I'm only nineteen this year. I have official documents that confirm this, and everyone from the Grand Xia knows this."

The crowd relaxed at his words. Some people simply did age a bit faster.

"Young master Long, I've heard rumors of your strength since arriving at the capital. I truly admire you. Do I have the qualifications to swap pointers with the young master?" Huang Chang cupped his hands towards Long Chen.

Everyone's gaze lit up at his words, and the crowd immediately began to cheer.

"Long Chen!"

“Long Chen!”

“Long Chen!”

Their shouts were surging waves that completely impassioned everyone’s blood, and countless fervent glances landed on Long Chen.